

a bipartisan way to improve the quality of life for working families everywhere.

Well, it is nearly 100 days later and what have the Republicans put forward? Have they tried to make college education more affordable? No, they have done nothing. Have they moved to guarantee health care for all children? No, they have done nothing. Have they tried to make pensions more portable and more secure? No, they have done nothing. Have they offered a plan for real campaign finance reform? No, Mr. Speaker, they have done nothing.

Democrats have a real agenda, and we have a message for the Republican leadership: Either lead, follow, or get out of the way.

Mr. Speaker, the 105th Congress does not have to be a do nothing Congress. Let us move forward on education and health care and pension security and real campaign finance reform. We can be the do something Congress, but we have got to start actually doing something, and we have got to start doing something today.

WE NEED A TAX SYSTEM WHICH IS FAIR AND SIMPLE

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have a problem, and my problem is I cannot decide which foolish, counterproductive, unfair tax I hate the most. I do not like the capital gains tax because it hurts economic growth and it kills job creation. I do not like the death tax because it takes one's life work, the fruit of a lifetime of labor and tells the grieving, "Pay up now, and if you can't afford to, I'm closing up the family business." I do not like business taxes because it takes the taxes twice, and like the capital gains tax, it means fewer jobs for the people who need them most.

But perhaps the most odious, offensive and outrageously unfair part of the Tax Code is the personal income tax. The burden is too heavy, the loopholes are too pervasive, and the complexity is simply overwhelming.

When we look at the set of volumes that compromise the Federal Tax Code, 36,000 pages at last count, we cannot help but think who designed this thing? It is time to get a grip, junk the Tax Code, start all over, cut tax rates and pass a tax system which is both simple and fair.

HOW DUMB CAN WE BE?

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, America's building a new war machine that promises to be the mother of all mayhem, an awesome air force and navy and the greatest land army ever in world history. And America is

bankrolling this Goliath in China. That is right, in China, despite the fact that China is a brutal dictatorship that has already threatened to nuke their neighbors.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Congress, "If that's not enough to freeze dry your stir fry, check this out."

While China now sells Barbie and GI Joe to our kids, General Cho is stocking our assets.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Hard-earned dollars by American workers building the next national security threat to the United States of America; how dumb can we be? How dumb?

The bottom line: Chinese toys today, but maybe just maybe a Chinese missile tomorrow. Think about it.

SUPPORT H.R. 15, THE MEDICARE PREVENTIVE BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 15, the Medicare Preventive Benefits Improvement Act. This legislation will ensure that important, sometimes even lifesaving, preventive benefits will be covered by the Medicare program.

The debate over the future of health care is one of the most critical issues we face as we approach the next century. H.R. 15 helps to address this important matter by providing preventive health benefits to seniors. It guarantees Medicare coverage for some of the most critical preventive screening tests available. These tests include mammographies for women 50 and over, pap smears, colon cancer screening, prostate screening and diabetes self-management supplies.

As we move forward with budget negotiations we need to realize that there are issues that have bipartisan support. Many are included in H.R. 15, which currently has 79 cosponsors both Democrat and Republican.

Mr. Speaker, we must act now and pass this preventive health bill. It is good legislative policy and, most importantly, it will save lives.

CONGRESS IN PERMANENT STALL

(Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, we are very frustrated by the slow start of this Congress. Even though we are about to pass the 100-day marker, this Congress is still stuck at the starting gate. To date we have only taken 60 votes compared to 2 years ago where we took 302 votes.

I would like to think that this Congress is sort of like an old car that is just taking a little while to get warmed up, but the troubling thing about this session is we seem to be in a permanent stall. We are not working

on issues that matter to American families now, and there is no plan to work on them in the future.

The real tragedy is that these are issues both Democrats, Republicans and the Americans would like to work on, issues like reforming campaign finance, balancing our budget and improving our schools. We are not just working on them now, but they are not scheduled for the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for this Congress to abandon the "who cares" legislative agenda that has dominated the first 100 days of this Congress and get to work on the issues that really matter to the American people.

JUDGES ABUSING THEIR POWER

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk lately about Federal judges abusing their power. Federal judges have been ignoring the will of the people by overturning elections and legislating from the bench.

Judge Thelton Henderson did just that last year when he disregarded the will of 5 million California voters. He issued an injunction prohibiting the enactment of California's Proposition 209, which passed with 54 percent of the vote in November of 1994. Yesterday a 3-judge appeals panel voted 3-0 to overturn Henderson's ruling and allow the enactment of Proposition 209.

The panel said, and I quote, "A system which permits one judge to block with the stroke of a pen what over four million State residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy."

I agree and applaud an all-America panel, 3-judge panel, for having the integrity to remind colleagues that they are there to interpret the law and not create it.

WHERE IS THE LEADERSHIP?

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, 4 years ago the Democrats were doing the heavy lifting to help hard-working families. The Family and Medical Leave Act, to help working parents, was law by February. The Motor-Voter Act, to bring more Americans into the democratic process, was law by May.

But now what are we doing? Nothing. We are not meeting, we are not working, we are not voting.

There is no excuse. There is work to be done. Too many of our young people cannot afford a college education. Too many children are dropping out of school. Ten million kids have no health insurance. In fact, while this Congress has done nothing, more than 300,000 children lost their health insurance.